

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SPC-03 H-03 L-03 INT-08 OMB-01 SS-15

TRSE-00 RSC-01 /055 R

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R 111458Z OCT 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, MX

SUBJECT: SALINITY LEGISLATION

REF: MEXICO 7318

1. LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE IS BEING PREPARED BY INTERIOR DEPARTMENT AND IS WELL ADVANCED. IT MUST INCLUDE NOT ONLY A DRAFT BILL BUT ALSO DETAILED FEASIBILITY REPORTS ON THE WORKS PROPOSED AND AN EXTENSIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT. THE INTERIOR DEPARTMENT HOPES TO SUBMIT 500-PAGE PACKAGE TO OMB IN PART THIS WEEK AND THE REST NEXT WEEK. OMB WILL CIRCULATE IT TO ALL INTERESTED FEDERAL AGENCIES FOR COMMENT. ALLOWING PROBABLE MINIMUM OF TWO WEEKS FOR THIS REVIEW, THE PACKAGE MIGHT BE TRANSMITTED TO THE CONGRESS DURING THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 29.

2. WE HAVE AS YET NO BASIS FOR ESTIMATING WHEN CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES MIGHT HOLD HEARINGS. HEARINGS COULD BECOME CONTROVERSIAL IF BASIN STATES RAISE OBJECTIONS TO THE AGREEMENT OR SEEK TO INCLUDE AUTHORIZATION OF OTHER WORKS. IF HEARINGS ARE COMPLETED IN NOVEMBER AND THE
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CONGRESS RETURNS AFTER THANKSGIVING, WE WOULD HOPE FOR

ENACTMENT SOMETIME IN DECEMBER, BUT MUST RECOGNIZE THAT IT MAY NOT REACH THE FLOOR UNTIL THE NEXT SESSION WHICH BEGINS IN JANUARY.

3. IN THE EVENT THAT THE LEGISLATION IS ENACTED AND MEXICO IS NOTIFIED BEFORE JANUARY 1, THE QUALITY COMMITMENT OF IMPERIAL DAM SALINITY PLUS 115 PPM WOULD BE OBSERVED BEGINNING JANUARY 1 IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TERMS OF MINUTE NO. 242, PARAGRAPH 1(A).

4. INTERIOR IS ALREADY IN THE PROCESS OF TRANSMITTING A REQUEST FOR A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION OF \$1.9 MILLION TO BEGIN DESIGN WORK. THESE FUNDS WOULD PROBABLY BECOME AVAILABLE SOON AFTER APPROVAL OF THE ENABLING LEGISLATION. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: collinp0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE201480
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: TRMARTIN:GLG
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731038/aaaabbsi.tel
Line Count: 79
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: MEXICO 7318
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: collinp0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23-Jan-2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <22 FEB 2002 by collinp0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SALINITY LEGISLATION
TAGS: PBOR, MX
To: MEXICO
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005